Automotive

JULY 27, 1992

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NEWSPAPER

late news

Workers to call Villager buyers

Hourly workers at Ford Motor Co.'s Avon Lake, Ohio, assembly plant will make up the customer relations support team for buyers of Mercury's new Villager minivan, which is built at the plant.

Don Schnur, president of UAW Local 2000, says 20 to 25 of the workers will call Villager owners after they have driven the vehicles at least 5,000 miles.

The objective is to identify any mechanical problems so adjustments can be made in the plant.

"We're pushing the responsibility right down to the level where the vehicles are being built," Schnur said.

If the workers identify problems, Schnur says they have the authority to make changes without the OK of a supervisor.

— *Kathy Jackson*

Ford to up cash on conversions

DETROIT — Ford Motor Co. is expected to announce a $750 dealer cash incentive on its Econoline van conversions this week, partly in response to Chevrolet's $1,000 dealer cash incentive on G-van conversions during the July 17 to Sept. 24 period.

see LATE NEWS, 2

Amid slump, Honda cuts Accord output

U.S. suppliers told to improve quality

PHIL FRAME
Staff Reporter

Reflecting its changing fortunes in the U.S. marketplace, Honda of America Manufacturing Inc. told suppliers last week that it will cut production at its two U.S. assembly plants by 27,800 units in the next two fiscal quarters and end production of the best-selling Accord at East Liberty, Ohio.

In a letter that was obtained by *Automotive News*, Honda also cautioned its suppliers that its competitors are improving quality at a faster rate, and appealed for across-the-board cost and quality gains. Both Ford Taurus and Saturn are breathing hard on the heels of Honda's two best-selling models, Accord and Civic, in terms of both volume and perceived quality.

"Although we made quality improvements in the 1992 J.D. Power Initial Quality Survey, our competitors made bigger gains," said the letter, signed by Satoshi Imai, Honda's senior vice president of purchasing, and Dave Nelson, vice president of purchasing. "We must do better." A Honda spokesman in Detroit said he had not seen the letter and could not comment.

In the letter dated July 21, the two executives said Honda will cut production at its plants in East Liberty and Marysville, Ohio, by 105 cars per day in the second half of its fiscal year, which ends March 31, 1993. Most of the reduction will occur on Marysville's line No. 2, which builds the Accord.

NO MORE F1? ➤ 36

In all, 27,800 units are being eliminated from Honda's production schedule, about 6 percent of the company's U.S. output of 451,197 units in calendar 1991. The rollback comes on the heels of a 25-car-per-day cut instituted in the fiscal second quarter, which ends July 31.

The company also is trimming production in Japan, where sales are down 7.5 percent in the first six months. The company said it shut its Suzuka plant for five days and the Saiyama plant for four days in the first half to adjust production to sales.

The second-quarter cuts in Ohio

see HONDA, 36

HANS G. LEHMANN/HIDDEN IMAGE

Though Accord production is being reduced in Ohio, Honda's new Civic coupe, snapped here by a spy photographer, isn't expected to be affected. The car goes on sale this fall.

Mazda President Yoshiro Wada has a go-slow strategy for Amati in U.S.

Amati's U.S. plan: stay small, profitable

KRISTINE STIVEN BREESE
Staff Reporter

HIROSHIMA, Japan — When an East Coast dealer offered to erect a palatial 20,000-square-foot building to house his Amati dealership, executives at the Mazda luxury channel had an unusual response.

They said no.

As Amati continues to plan for its spring 1994 launch, Mazda Motor Corp. is distinguishing itself with its less-is-more strategy. It wants a small network of 7,500-square-foot showrooms moving just 50,000 units a year.

While most manufacturers are trying to get dealers to spend

see AMATI, 36

Machining fluids linked to cancer

GM, UAW pay for study by Harvard

KATHY JACKSON
Staff Reporter

A confidential report from Harvard University scientists says there is strong evidence that machining fluids used in auto plants are causing cancers and respiratory problems in workers.

The study concluded that auto workers don't die from cancer more often than Americans in general. But it said there are more deaths than normal from certain cancers, including those of the throat, pancreas, rectum and prostate.

In addition, workers who inhale machining fluids on the job have a higher rate of breathing problems and respiratory illnesses, the report said.

Though the report didn't prove a cause-and-effect relationship, it is the strongest evidence yet of a link between exposure to machining oils and cancer, particularly laryngeal cancer.

"Up until now, there was no strong evidence of cancer" connected to the oils, said Roger Wabeke, former supervisor of industrial hygiene for Ford Motor Co. "The workers should be concerned," said Wabeke, now at Wayne State University in Detroit.

General Motors and the UAW paid $2.2 million for the study. They are concerned enough that they have agreed to spend an additional $2.3 million for a series of follow-up studies during the next three years.

Since cancers and diseases can take several years to show up, GM and the UAW agreed with the Harvard team that much more information will be available with continued follow-up of exposed workers.

The study, which began in 1985, is the most comprehensive look yet at machining fluids and their relation to workers' health, according to Dr. Douglas VanBrocklin, GM's general director of occupational safety and health. The study, which VanBrocklin called "very extensive and very good," was initiated because several smaller studies showed increased rates of cancers among auto and other workers who work with machining fluids.

It also was the first such project

see CANCER, 34

EXPOSURE CATEGORIES BY PLANT

Number of workers at GM plants exposed to various oils.

Exposure:	Hydra-Matic	Gear & Axle	Saginaw
Straight oils	1,500	1,500	3,000
Soluble oils	0	0	5,500
Straight and soluble oils	2,500	6,000	2,500
Straight, soluble and synthetics	6,000	0	0
Never exposed	5,000	2,500	4,000
TOTAL	**15,000**	**10,000**	**15,000**

Source: General Motors and UAW

NADA to spend $1 million on 1992 election

CHARLES M. THOMAS
Staff Reporter

With so much at stake in the November election for the nation's 19,000 new-car dealers, the National Automobile Dealers Association's political action committee will contribute more than $1 million to its favorite candidates for Congress.

NADA hopes to pack Congress with new faces sympathetic to its positions on potent issues like international trade, luxury taxes and federally mandated family leaves.

Candidates who at the very least will listen to the association's opinions on taxes, corporate aver-

see NADA, 37

NADA's campaign issues ➤ 37

Chrysler unveils entire '93 line

The LH trio: Chrysler Concorde, Eagle Vision, Dodge Intrepid, pictured, Page 3

INTRO-'93

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Automotive News

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Chrysler will sell fewer '93s to rental companies. PAGE 4

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Hughes, Saturn test electric car service strategies. PAGE 6

THE LONG HAUL
Oldsmobile Achieva ads tout cars' durability. PAGE 8

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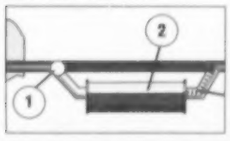
Suzuki, VW to develop new minicar. PAGE 8

SETTING THE TRAP



▲ Device touted as alternative to heated catalysts. PAGE 35

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correction

A July 20 story on Page 1 incorrectly said General Motors had created its corporate audit staff on July 1. Actually, on that day the company formed a dealer audit section and made it part of the existing corporate audit staff.

HANS G. LEHMANN/HIDDEN IMAGE

HANS G. LEHMANN/HIDDEN IMAGE

GM's new G-car

Spy photographers caught heavily disguised prototypes of GM's G-body cars being prepared for the 1994 model year. Oldsmobile gets the four-door Toronado, above, while Buick has a two-door Riviera.

latenews

CONTINUED *from* PAGE 1

Ford also is expected to continue offering extended free floorplanning to dealers on the chassis, which is why it isn't fully matching Chevrolet.

Both manufacturers already offer $1,300 consumer rebates on the vans in addition to the dealer cash. GMC Truck's version of the July 17-Sept. 24 dealer incentive on conversions pays $750 per unit until a dealer hits a quota and $1,500 per unit on all conversion van sales after that.

— *Joseph Bohn*

GM announces three recalls

DETROIT — General Motors is recalling 502,000 vehicles.

One recall covers about 250,000 1991 and 1992 model Chevrolet Caprice, Buick Roadmaster and Oldsmobile Custom Cruiser cars to replace a plastic-covered shoulder belt guide loop. The plastic may crack, letting a steel subplate cut the belt.

About 215,000 1990-1992 model Geo Storms are being recalled so dealers can install a reinforcing plate on the steering wheel hub. The hub could break in certain frontal crashes, reducing driver control and the protection of the steering system and driver-side airbag.

A third recall covers about 37,000 1991 and 1992 model Chevrolet Caprice police cars with steel wheels. Cracks may develop around the lug nut mounting circle. Wheels and lug nuts will be replaced.

Toledo OKs aid for Chrysler

TOLEDO, Ohio — Municipal leaders have approved $96 million in tax breaks for Chrysler Corp. to help the automaker move Dodge Dakota production here.

Chrysler plans to invest more than $84 million at its Toledo Jeep plant to prepare it for Dakota production. The company said the move will not necessarily mean new jobs but could save up to 1,130 jobs at the plant, which builds Jeep Cherokees and Wranglers. About 4,500 people work there. Chrysler announced the move two weeks ago. Besides tax abatements, the company asked for infrastructure improvements around the plant.

— *The Associated Press*

Cadillac offers 2nd Northstar

DETROIT — Cadillac will introduce a second version of its new Northstar 4.6-liter, overhead camshaft, 32-valve V-8 engine with lower horsepower and higher torque for improved fuel economy.

The second Northstar will debut as an option for a new 1993 Eldorado model called the Eldorado Sport Coupe. The standard engine on the Eldorado and Eldorado Sport Coupe will be the 4.9-liter pushrod V-8.

The new version of the Northstar has 270 horsepower and 300 pounds-feet of torque compared with 295 hp and 290 pounds-feet of torque for the full-power Northstar. The full-power Northstar is standard equipment on the 1993 Seville Touring Sedan, Eldorado Touring Coupe and Allante.

— *Phil Frame*

Infiniti drops top sales post

Infiniti Division of Nissan Motor Corp. in U.S.A. eliminated the position of national sales manager last week when Tom Eastwood left the post to become general manager for Nissan Division's Northwest region.

Eastwood had held the Infiniti job for nearly a year. He followed Earl Hesterberg, who left last August to become general manager of Nissan Division.

Sales managers who reported to Eastwood now report to Infiniti General Manager Bill Bruce.

Infiniti joins Nissan Division in dropping the position of national sales manager.

— *Kristine Stiven Breese*

Navistar to fix school buses

CHICAGO — Navistar International Transportation Corp. will recall school bus chassis built since Sept. 1, 1978, to fix a fuel system defect.

The company said that as few as 24,000 or as many as 185,000 vehicles in the United States could be affected.

The recall was prompted by a National Highway Transportation Safety Administration crash test of a Navistar bus chassis equipped with a 35-gallon fuel tank. During the test, fuel leakage exceeded allowable levels.

Navistar said it would notify customers next month of plans for fixing the defect. Customers with questions can call 1-800-448-7825.

LH road show set for suppliers

Chrysler Corp. will take its LH sedans on a two-month tour of 15 major suppliers in the Midwest and South beginning Aug. 11.

Suppliers will get to see the new sedans before many are available in showrooms.

Chrysler spokeswoman Kelly Lasecki said this is Chrysler's way of thanking the suppliers on whom it depends for 70 percent of each vehicle it produces.

— *Gwendolyn Zonghetti*

briefly

Nissan dollars help L.A. rise

Nissan Motor Corp. in U.S.A. has started a $5 million fund to support economic development in Los Angeles neighborhoods that rioted in April. The local Urban League was the first announced recipient, and its president, John Mack, said the new Nissan Foundation's "focus on long-term solutions is the approach necessary to ensure that everyone is included at the table of opportunity."

HAPPY BIRTHDAY . . . NOT — Oldsmobile P.R. guy Gus Buenz admits that special advertising commemorating the division's 95th anniversary is in the works. But it didn't run July 21, as a Chicago newspaper reported. Buenz said a dealer who tipped the paper had the month wrong. Olds celebrates its birthday Aug. 21.

AUTO HISTORY, NO. 415 — When Jim Perkins was a **Chevrolet** field rep in 1962, he called on a dealer named King to sell showroom banners and other promo stuff. The dealer signed up for every item during the first half of the presentation, then said, "It's getting close to lunch," and he signed for the rest without waiting for the pitch. "You ought to make this tougher for me," said Perkins. King answered: "Let me tell you something, son: 85 percent of everything Chevrolet's got in the way of programs and merchandise ain't worth a tinker's damn. But the other 15 percent has made me a multi-millionaire. And I'm not smart enough to know which 15 percent."

OFFICE ON WHEELS — When Michigan Gov. John Engler ran for office in 1990, he said he would travel the state in an **Oldsmobile,** not the jet helicopter favored by the incumbent. Engler won and kept his promise, but now he's ready to break it. The Guv accepted the keys to a 1992 **Ford** Econoline last week that had been modified into a mobile office complete with computer, telephone, desk and reclining armchair.

CORNY — Sioux Falls, S.D., is in the middle of a cornfield that runs three or four states wide, so maybe you knew that it was testing vegetable oil in its diesel trucks (for an 80 percent drop in hydrocarbon emissions) and Mayor Jack White was testing a car burning E85 (85 percent grain alcohol, 15 percent gasoline). Next: The motorcycle patrol is thinking about some E85 Harleys.

GASSY — So is Canada the propane capital? Earlier this summer, **Chrysler Canada Ltd.** signed a deal with the Propane Gas Association of Canada to develop a propane concept vehicle that could lead to a production pickup or minivan by January 1995.

ROSS GETS REAL WORK — Sure, Ross Roberts can sell Fords by the thousands. He's general manager of **Ford Division.** But can he sell them one at a time? Roberts wore a sales hat at Conyers Riverside Ford in Detroit for an all-star celebrity event that gives $500 to charity for each vehicle a VIP sells. Roberts helped close a deal on a 1993 Escort LX, but it wasn't delivered right away so "we haven't put a gold star by his name yet," dealer Nathan Conyers joked.

Roberts: waiting to get his gold

Chrysler cuts rental fleet sales for '93

MARY CONNELLY
Staff Reporter

Chrysler Corp. will reduce its sales to daily rental companies by 28 percent in the 1993 model year.

Theodor Cunningham, Chrysler's executive vice president of sales and marketing, said Chrysler plans to sell 150,000 daily rental units in the 1993 model year. Chrysler expects to sell 208,000 such vehicles in the 1992 model year and sold 256,000 in the 1991 model year, Cunningham said.

Chrysler is trying to reduce its sales of low-margin daily rental vehicles in favor of retail units, which bring higher gross profits to the company and its dealers.

Fleets account for about half the total sales of the Dodge Dynasty.

In addition, Chrysler expects to sell 95 percent of its new LH midsized sedans as retail units in the 1993 model year, said Edwin Brust, general product manager of Chrysler's large-car platform team.

In contrast, about 50 percent of Dodge Dynasty units are fleet sales, Brust said.

The LH cars are the Dodge Intrepid, Eagle Vision and Chrysler Concorde. Chrysler plans to build 180,000 LH cars in the 1993 model year.

Chrysler also is prohibiting the placing of stickers or promotional material on the LH sedans, identifying them as rental cars. Tom Stallkamp, Chrysler's vice president of procurement and supply and general manager of large-car operations, said such identification devalues the vehicle in the mind of the consumer.

Chrysler is releasing to daily rental fleets in two locations the first 1,000 LH units produced at its Bramalea, Ontario, assembly plant. Production began June 30.

Some 850 of those cars are being sent to daily rental fleets in Orlando, Fla., for quick customer feedback and high-mileage accumulation. The remaining 150 will be sent to fleets in Denver for high-altitude evaluation.

Chrysler engineers and technicians will be in Orlando and Denver for up to 30 days to monitor the cars' overall performance.

10-DAY CAR AND TRUCK SALES, BY MAKE

	July 11-20, 1992	July 11-20, 1991
Acura (imp. car)	**2,789**	**4,438**
Domestic car	11,515	13,413
Imported car	3,843	4,367
Honda	**15,358**	**17,780**
AMERICAN HONDA	**18,147**	**22,218**
Domestic car	39,617	42,323
Imported car	2,340	2,860
Domestic truck	37,071	35,102
FORD MOTOR CO.	**79,028**	**80,285**
Domestic car	1,982	1,487
Domestic truck	229	292
MAZDA	**2,211**	**1,779**
Domestic car	1,938	1,742
MITSUBISHI	**1,938**	**1,742**
Domestic car	3,389	3,298
Domestic truck	2,295	4,120
NISSAN	**5,684**	**7,418**
Domestic car	1,144	1,300
Domestic truck	1,611	836
SUBARU-ISUZU	**2,755**	**2,136**
Lexus (imp. car)	**1,936**	**2,193**
Domestic car	10,811	12,791
Imported car	6,815	9,711
Domestic truck	2,106	0
Imported truck	4,921	9,194
Toyota	**24,653**	**31,696**
TOYOTA	**26,589**	**33,889**
Domestic car	**78,396**	**76,354**
Import car	**17,723**	**23,569**
TOTAL CAR	**88,119**	**99,923**
Domestic truck	**43,312**	**40,350**
Import truck	**4,921**	**9,194**
TOTAL TRUCK	**48,233**	**49,544**
TOTAL REPORTED CARS & TRUCKS	**136,352**	**149,467**

There were 8 selling days in the period this year and 9 last year

Eaton tells production team to find world's best

MARY CONNELLY
Staff Reporter

Chrysler Corp. is taking the team approach to the factory floor.

Chairman-designate Robert Eaton has appointed an eight-person production system team, charged with finding and figuring out the world's best production practices. Eaton wants a plan to implement improvements at Chrysler ready by year end.

Eaton: looking for the best

Formation of the production team was reported last week in the company's internal publication, *The Chrysler Times*.

The newsletter described Eaton as "a firm believer in benchmarking," the practice of seeking out and adopting the world's best practices and methods.

Eaton, who will succeed Lee Iacocca as Chrysler chairman on Jan. 1, said the team should recommend an "umbrella program" under which all the quality programs, cost and cultural change ideas can be grouped. He called the team "an important undertaking that will have a major impact on our future competitiveness."

"One of our most important goals is to be among the world's highest-quality and most efficient automotive companies," Eaton said. "We need to provide employees with the tools and management structure needed to accelerate progress on cultural change, quality improvement and greater cost efficiencies."

Members of the eight-person team are: Tom Breneiser and Jeffrey Chiapetta, manufacturing; Ken Francese, personnel, administration and development and employee relations; Jim Holden, sales and marketing; Tom Johnston, quality; Harry Lewis, management information systems; Craig Love, vehicle engineering; and Barry Price, procurement and supply.

The team's work will be reviewed by a steering committee of Eaton, Chrysler President Robert Lutz and the company's four executive vice presidents: Theodor Cunningham, sales and marketing; Thomas Denomme, Corporate Staff Group; Dennis Pawley, manufacturing; and Jerome York, chief financial officer.

Mercedes' Win/Win lease helped double the sales of 300-class cars in May and June.

Euro luxury at low cost

Lease deals help protect share

JIM HENRY
Staff Reporter

NEW YORK — European luxury cars are priced to move these days.

Mercedes will lease you a $50,000 300E for only $23,000 plus a down payment. Jaguar is leasing a $61,000 XJS coupe for only $36,000, with no down payment. BMW has offered leases as low as $33,000 on a $57,000 735iL.

It's costing them money, but after years of complaining about the Japanese buying market share, the Europeans are fighting fire with fire.

"It's very important for them to protect their market share now," said Susan Jacobs of Jacobs Automotive Inc., a consulting firm in Little Falls, N.J.

"They have got to protect their share of the current market. When the market goes up, presumably their sales will go up with the market, and they will make more money to offset what these leases are going to cost them," she said.

Short-term, cut-rate leases are the discount of choice.

For one thing, luxury-car owners are accustomed to the idea of leasing. Lease discounts seem less harmful to a tony image than an out-and-out customer rebate.

At the end of a lease the customer is bound to return to the seller.

"That's a major benefit for us," said Dennis Lassiter, marketing programs manager for Jaguar Cars Inc.

"The (lease) customer is going to come back to see us in two or three years, and we'll be there with our new products," he said. Lassiter said Jaguar's present SuperLease discount is "essentially free money" — interest-free, that is.

Michael Dale, president of Jaguar Cars Inc., said Jaguar forecast its lease business would be around 40 to 50 percent of total volume, but it's running more like 60 to 70 percent.

Leasing lowers monthly payments, since in effect the customer only has to cover the cost of depreciation for the lease term, rather than the entire cost of the car.

To build in a further discount, companies take a risk and set an optimistic resale value at the end of the lease.

Mercedes-Benz has a reputation for being synonymous with high resale value, but its Win/Win leases push the envelope, even for Mercedes.

"When Mercedes moves, everybody else follows. Their main problem is their price positioning is simply too high," Jacobs said. "They're spending what the market is directing they have to spend."

For example, the lease deal for the 300E assumes a residual value of $27,916. That's 56 percent of the suggested retail price of $49,850. But a recent *Automotive Lease Guide*, which tabulates residual values for financial institutions, dealers and leasing companies, pegs the 300E at 47 percent of MSRP after three years.

The difference — in effect, the Mercedes discount — is about $4,500.

Mercedes says with the Win/Win program its lease penetration has jumped from about 40 percent of total volume to around 60 percent. Win/Win began in April. In May and June, 300-class sales nearly doubled over the year-ago period to 5,457. If 60 percent of those were leased, with a $4,500 discount on each one, that's $14.7 million on the 300 class alone.

Cut-rate lease deals have helped boost sales of the Jaguar XJS coupe, top, and the BMW 735iL, above.

Mercedes-Benz Credit Corp. reported last week that its new business grew 40 percent, or more than $1.4 billion, for the first half of 1991, compared to the same six months last year. More than 75 percent of the addition was in leases.

Jaguar, which has a poorer reputation than Mercedes for resale value, is out on a longer limb. The leasing guide pegs a 4-year-old XJS coupe at 31 percent of suggested retail price. After four years, a SuperLease customer will have paid only about 60 percent of MSRP. If Jaguar has to make up the difference, that could be as much as $6,000 per car.

Dale, the Jaguar president, said Jaguar is confident residual values will improve because parent company Ford Motor Co. has improved build quality so much.

"We could've never supported the residuals" before Ford, he said. "The lease deal is a direct result of better quality. We're saying the marketplace as it stands is wrong with regard to where our residual values will be."

Trucks strong as Ford sales rise in mid-July

JIM HENRY
Staff Reporter

Ford Motor Co.'s sales of new cars and light trucks rose 10.7 percent in mid-July with trucks supplying most of the momentum. Ford truck deliveries jumped 18.8 percent, and cars climbed 4.5 percent.

There were eight days in the period this year vs. nine last year, so comparisons are based on the daily selling rate.

Ford was the only Big 3 maker to report mid-July sales. General Motors is on vacation and did not issue any numbers. Chrysler Corp. does not divulge 10-day results.

Other makes reporting full mid-July deliveries were Acura and Honda and Lexus and Toyota. Sales of U.S.-built cars and trucks were reported for Nissan, Mazda, Mitsubishi, Subaru and Isuzu.

Sales for Ford Motor Co. and the reporting Japanese makes rose 2.6 percent in mid-July on a daily-rate basis. Cars were down 0.8 percent, and trucks climbed 9.5 percent.

Automotive News usually estimates 10-day sales for Chrysler and for many imports, but this report is confined to those companies that announced their sales. The reporting makes represent about 40 percent of the market.

Toyota Motor Sales U.S.A. Inc. sold 26,589 Lexus cars and Toyota cars and trucks, down 11.7 percent from last year.

Honda and Acura sales by American Honda Motor Co. Inc. were down 8.1 percent.

Sales of Nissan's U.S.-built cars and trucks were down for the period, and Mazda, Mitsubishi and Subaru-Isuzu reported gains.

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in brief

SERVICE

Illinois to inspect auto salvage yards

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — The state will begin auditing salvage yards, repair and rebuilding shops and scrap processors, checking for stolen vehicles and parts.

The secretary of state's office will hire 35 civilian employees to conduct about 3,000 audits and vehicle and parts inspections. Auditors can inspect record books and auto yards, but they cannot make arrests.

There are an estimated 5,700 salvage yards and repair shops in the state.

The program is funded by the $1 annual fee insurance companies pay for each vehicle they insure in the state. Auditors will begin in the Chicago metropolitan area.

Toyota adds to service center

TORRANCE, Calif. — Toyota Motor Sales U.S.A. Inc. has added a body and paint repair area to its Service Development center.

The 17,438-square-foot addition is used for equipment evaluation and training instruction and development. Equipment includes a downdraft paint spraying booth, hydraulic frame straightening equipment, electronic measuring systems and a fully equipped paint mixing laboratory.

GM selling rebuilt steering pumps

DETROIT — General Motors' Service Parts Operations has started marketing remanufactured power steering pumps.

Coverage is provided for GM passenger cars from 1965 through the current model year. Light trucks from the 1961 model year are also covered.

The new product line also includes capsticks and reservoir and seal kits. The pumps carry the same 12-month warranty as new GM replacement parts.

Chrysler LH cars designed with eye on service issues

Early involvement prompts changes

ROGER ROWAND
Staff writer

When Chrysler Corp. takes the wraps off its LH models this fall it will have a great deal to talk about in the area of service.

"We are trying our hardest to get our feet on the floor in serviceability," said Ken Betz, manager of serviceability for large car platform.

Betz told of serviceability specialists getting in on the planning of the cars and following them along to production, working continuously with the post-sale environment in mind.

Betz said the LH serviceability tale is one of small victories, like the use of a better engine oil dipstick and getting alternator hold-down bolts moved so they're readily accessible to repair technicians.

It's also a story of small defeats. Those included unsuccessful attempts to avoid the necessity of removing the instrument panel to do some of the heating, ventilation and air conditioning system service. Removing the instrument panel is necessary because air conditioning ducts are molded as part of the structure.

Occasionally, Betz, said, there were toss-ups and compromises.

One of those was the changed location of the engine coolant thermostat. The device was moved to a spot where it is more accessible than where engineers had put it originally. But, Betz said, the new location means coolant must be drained before the fuel rail can be replaced.

"There are things we are proud of. When we do our job no one seems to know it. But, when it goes the other way, the whole world seems to know it," Betz said.

There even are victories in the instrument panel debate.

Top engine in the LH is a 3.5-liter 24-valve V-6 with dual throttle bodies.

Betz noted that the car-wide panel was originally designed to be larger at the bottom than at the top, which meant technicians couldn't get it out of the car.

Pointing out that fact early in the development process got the problem fixed.

Other gains for serviceability behind the instrument panel were improvements in the quality of heater cores with the use of vacuum brazing during manufacturing, improved corrosion resistance and use of fewer fasteners.

The instrument cluster in the instrument panel is held in place by just two screws, one clip and some plastic push-ins for ease of removal and reinstallation.

The charge in the cars' air conditioning system is derived electronically instead of being observed through a sight glass. The level of charge is accurately calculated with readings from temperature and pressure sensors in the system.

The Concorde, Intrepid and Vision will be the first Chrysler cars to use chlorofluorocarbon-free 134a refrigerant instead of R-12, which damages the earth's ozone layer.

Dealers are required to buy a new refrigerant recovery system to service the air conditioning system. Chrysler is also introducing the refrigerant on the Jeep Grand Cherokee and its minivans for the 1993 model year.

The service group also fought over location of the LH's transmission dipstick. The outcome: "Not perfect, but a lot more accessible," Betz said.

When the LH cars are nearing the end of the assembly line at the Bramalea plant in Brampton, Ontario, the rear shocks are inserted through the backlight opening and the top retaining nuts are torqued all at one time by an automated tool.

The location allows added jounce travel for improved ride and handling. It's fine for the assembler in the factory but not so nifty for the service technician in a dealership because the bolts he has to reach are right under the package shelf and are close to rear shoulder belt locations. Removing and replacing the shock requires a special curved wrench.

But even there, service personnel won reduced torque on the nuts for easier removal. There is no need to go inside the car to service the shocks.

Service work up in June

DETROIT — New-car dealership service departments were busier in June than they were a year ago.

Parts and service business during the month totaled 108.7 percent of that reported in June 1991, according to the *Automotive News* Service Index.

For the first half of the year, parts and service business was 3.5 percent higher than in the first six months in 1991.

In June, all five categories tracked by the index posted gains. Both shop parts sales and sales of all parts and accessories rose 12 percent. Each of those categories was up at least 6 percent for the first half of 1992.

Repair orders written was the only category to decline in the first half, down a scant 0.1 percent from the same period in 1991.

Among dealerships reporting an increase for June, several cited better management practices and aggressive marketing as key factors.

Figures used in the Service Index are compiled from a cross-section of new-car dealerships.

SERVICE INDEX
108.7★

	June, '92 vs June, '91	Jan.-June, '92 vs Jan.-June, '91
Gross Profit on All Labor and P&A Sales	+ 3.6%	+ 1.6%
Repair Orders Written	+ 5.4%	– 0.1%
Total Labor Sales (Customer & Warranty)	+ 6.2%	+ 0.6%
Shop Parts Sales (Customer & Warranty)	+12.1%	+ 6.2%
Sales of All P&A	+12.0%	+ 6.0%

★ Survey by Automotive News shows that dealers' service and parts business in June 1992 was 108.7 percent of business in June 1991. Service business in 1992 was 103.5 percent of business in the corresponding period in 1991.

GM adds exhaust program

DALE JEWETT
Service Editor

General Motors dealers are getting into the exhaust system repair business with the Goodwrench Exhaust Program.

The program was started in early June, said Richard Arntzen, general product manager for GM's Service Parts Operations.

Dealers who join the program get mufflers, resonators, pipes, accessories and service tools.

The primary target customers are owners of GM vehicles that are 3 to 7 years old, Arntzen said.

The program covers 1981 through 1990 GM passenger cars and light trucks. Many popular non-GM domestic and import vehicles for the same period are covered by the program.

Replacement mufflers are covered by a lifetime warranty to the original purchaser; exhaust pipes carry a 12-month warranty; labor is covered for 12 months or 12,000 miles.

The program includes advertising that is geared to the individual dealership "to let people know we're in the business," Arntzen said. But neither the ads nor the program are specifically keyed to challenge the independent and franchise exhaust repair shops.

"With the quality, a competitive warranty and a fair price we feel we are competitive enough," Arntzen said. "That's not to say we'll be the highest or lowest priced."

Dealers can get into the program for as little as $3,000, Arntzen said, or spend up to $40,000 if they want to stock a lot of inventory. Stocking racks and service tools are provided free.

The program was tested at GM dealerships in the Columbus, Ohio, area.

Arntzen said one thing learned from the test was not to have the stocking racks and parts arrive at a dealership at the same time because it cluttered the service area. Racks now arrive at a dealership a few days before the parts.

European sales off 4.2% in June

Weighed down by a 17.4 percent slide in Germany, European passenger-car sales in June fell 4.2 percent from a year earlier despite strong gains in Italy, France, Britain and Spain.

The June decline was the sixth consecutive month that sales in Germany, Europe's biggest market, have fallen below the frenzied pace of 1991. Analysts expect the downturn to quicken before the end of the year as high interest rates and economic slowdown further dampen consumer spending.

According to *Automotive News* estimates, sales in the 17-nation European market fell to 1.13 million units last month from 1.18 million a year earlier. But the overall decline masked strong gains in Italy, France, Britain and Spain. They are the four largest markets in Europe after Germany.

Sales in Italy jumped 17.1 percent from a year earlier to 226,700; France rose 7.7 percent to 141,100; Britain rose 4.4 percent to 102,500; and Spain was up 13.3 percent to 93,800.

For the first six months, sales were 7.36 million units, off 1.1 percent from a year earlier. Sales in Germany plunged 9.2 percent.

The drop in Germany dragged down the sales of three of the six major European makers in June. Two had barely measurable gains:

- Volkswagen AG sales surged 7.6 percent in the month to 211,700 units, on continuing strong demand for the Golf III. The company, Europe's biggest carmaker, posted a record market share of 18.8 percent in June.
- Fiat Auto S.p.A. sales slipped 2.1 percent to 142,900 units, yielding a 12.7 percent share of market.
- General Motors Europe slid 10.5 percent to 133,200, for an 11.8 percent share.
- Ford of Europe sales fell 9.8 percent to 127,500 units, for an 11.3 percent share.
- Peugeot SA posted a 1.5 percent gain to 126,200 units, yielding an 11.2 percent share.
- Renault SA sales rose an imperceptible 0.6 percent to 112,800, for a 10 percent share.

Among other European makers, BMW AG slipped 0.8 percent; Mercedes-Benz AG fell 16.7 percent; Rover Group fell 8 percent and AB Volvo was down 4 percent. Saab rose 8.2 percent.

Japanese makers raised their share a full point to 8.6 percent, despite a 16 percent sales drop.

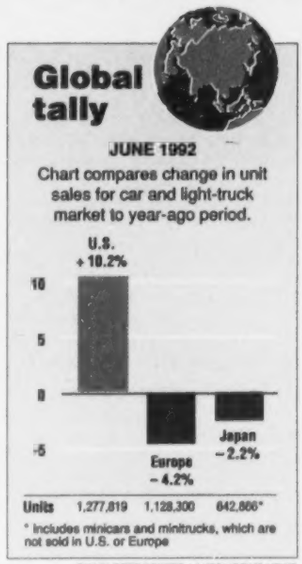
NEW-CAR SALES BY COUNTRY IN EUROPE

Country	6 mos. 1992	% change vs. 1991
Germany	2,186,500	– 9.2
Italy	1,425,700	5.6
France	991,600	0.1
United Kingdom	768,700	– 4.1
Spain	529,200	16.5
Belgium-Lux.	320,600	8.5
Netherlands	293,100	– 7.4
Austria	189,200	7.9
Switzerland	176,300	– 3.2
Portugal	144,200	24.4
Sweden	91,500	– 8.6
Greece	77,700	– 2.3
Denmark	49,900	5.5
Ireland	44,500	– 1.5
Finland	39,900	– 26.0
Norway	30,600	11.3
TOTAL	**7,359,200**	**– 1.1**

EUROPEAN SALES BY MANUFACTURER

Manufacturer	6 mos. 1992	% share[1]	6 mos. 1991	% change
Volkswagen[2]	1,289,100	17.5	1,221,900	5.5
General Motors[3]	916,100	12.4	948,400	– 3.4
Fiat Auto[4]	904,900	12.3	970,600	– 6.8
Peugeot S.A.[5]	873,200	11.9	831,700	5.0
Ford[6]	849,200	11.5	901,500	– 5.8
(Jaguar	5,500	0.1	6,700	– 17.9)
Renault	762,000	10.4	729,600	4.4
BMW	237,400	3.2	209,600	13.3
Nissan	237,400	3.2	246,500	– 3.7
Mercedes-Benz	232,000	3.2	251,100	– 7.6
Toyota	170,600	2.3	196,600	– 13.2
Rover	156,600	2.1	180,300	– 13.1
Mazda	147,700	2.0	159,900	– 7.6
Volvo	115,000	1.6	111,900	2.8
Honda	94,100	1.3	90,700	3.7
Mitsubishi	90,700	1.2	105,800	– 14.3
Suzuki	56,800	0.8	55,000	3.3
Lada	46,900	0.6	54,200	– 13.5
Daihatsu	29,900	0.4	28,500	4.9
Subaru	29,500	0.4	29,900	– 1.3
Skoda	23,800	0.3	25,300	– 5.9
Saab	20,800	0.3	28,400	– 26.8
Others	75,500	1.0	66,300	13.9
TOTAL	**7,359,200**	**100.0**	**7,443,700**	**– 1.1**

1 Does not add to 100 because of rounding.
2 Includes Volkswagen, Audi and Seat brands.
3 Includes Opel, Vauxhall, GM—U.S. and Isuzu; excludes Saab.
4 Includes Fiat, Alfa Romeo and Lancia.
5 Includes Peugeot and Citroen.
6 Includes Jaguar.



CHARLOTTE WINTER / AUTOMOTIVE NEWS

Turnaround seen for ailing Britain

LONDON — Are sales in the United Kingdom — the sick man of the European car industry — finally ready to rebound?

After a 33-month string of consecutive year-on-year declines that was finally broken in May and June, many analysts are starting to think so.

"There's a lot of pent-up demand out there, and the trend is looking good," said Neil Marshall, chief economist of the Retail Motor Industry Federation, Britain's equivalent of the National Automobile Dealers Association. "I think August could be a record month."

British car sales slid 21 percent last year to 1.59 million units, and are down 4.1 percent for the first six months of 1992.

Based on the upticks in May and June, however, analysts say the market now appears ready to take off in August, traditionally the strongest month of the year for British car sales.

"The market should be up as much as 10 percent," said Garel Rhys, a professor at Cardiff University in Wales.

"This stimulation should carry through to September and October, and more than offset the weak first half. I think we're shaping up for a total market of 1.67 million units for the year."

— *Maurice Glover*

Omaha and Little Rock remain good plant sites

LINDSAY CHAPPELL
Staff Reporter

Industrial site consultants who helped BMW AG choose South Carolina for a new car factory last month believe other new factories will locate in sites remote from the existing industry.

Two likely sites will be Omaha, Neb., which BMW considered as an alternative, and Little Rock, Ark., one of the consultants believes.

"Omaha didn't meet BMW's criteria for a site, but it will meet someone's," said James A. Schriner, vice president of PHH Fantus, an international site-search firm. "Little Rock has been considered by other companies, and it will be considered again."

Mazda Motor Co. considered Omaha before building a U.S. plant in Flat Rock, Mich., and a carmaker that Schriner declined to identify considered Little Rock before building elsewhere.

Schriner and Eb Weller, a Fantus director, helped BMW weed through 200 potential U.S. plant sites to select Greer, S.C., for a factory that will build up to 75,000 cars a year.

"The rule of thumb in the old days was that an auto plant must be of a certain size to be profitable," Weller said. "New technology is making it possible to consider smaller plants, and also plants that are farther away from traditional industry centers."

For the past decade, Japanese carmakers have built U.S. plants outside the Detroit-Great Lakes industry hub. Big 3 makers have long operated far-flung plants in places like California and Georgia, but in recent years have phased some out in favor of more Midwest production. The newest Big 3 factory, Chrysler's Jefferson North Assembly plant, opened this year in Detroit.

James M. Rubenstein, a geographer and author of a new book on auto plant locations, suggests that future sites will be determined based on their proximity to customers. He predicts that carmakers will increasingly put greenfield plants closer to their specific markets, with less regard for the proximity of suppliers, technical support or past plant locations.

That will mean more plants outside of the current industry center, he said.

"All cars have a different geographical market-center and it will be advantageous to produce where you can deliver the product quickly and cheaply," said Rubenstein, professor of geography at the University of Miami in Ohio, and author of "The Changing U.S. Auto Industry: A Geographical Analysis."

Half of all BMW's U.S. sales comes from the eastern part of the country, north, south and west of the Greer site. Saturn Corp. selected Spring Hill, Tenn., as a plant site in 1985 because it was central to consumers around the country, Rubenstein notes.

"The move south was already occurring before BMW came along," he said. "BMW has just taken it a little further."

Saturn buys $25 million paint shop

LINDSAY CHAPPELL
Staff Reporter

Saturn Corp. has spent $25 million to change paint-shop technology at its Spring Hill plant to comply with Tennessee and federal air emissions regulations.

The company determined in early 1991, less than a year after it began production, that it would not comply with limits on volatile organic compound emissions and began working with state officials to correct the problem.

Saturn has installed a new carbon absorption system for its paint shop that is expected to reduce emissions by one-third.

A company spokeswoman said the plant's overall emission levels have been in compliance with EPA guidelines, but it exceeded certain guidelines.

The carbon absorption system, which is also used at an older General Motors plant in Van Nuys, Calif., removes airborne solvents by passing paint shop exhaust through a filter of carbon traps.

The $25 million system is part of $48 million that Saturn has just invested in its two-year-old factory. Also included are $13 million in new tooling and facilities for a station wagon that enters production in August and $10 million to build new warehouse space.

The warehouse addition triples storage to 310,000 square feet.

The spokeswoman said additional space was necessary to house new parts for the wagon, and also to accommodate increased output.

Chrysler CAW wins tax refund

TORONTO — The ship finally came in for more than 8,000 Chrysler Corp. CAW workers who began receiving tax refunds last week averaging about $4,375 Canadian each.

The total is equivalent to about $29.3 million U.S.

In 1979 when Chrysler asked for government loan guarantees to avoid bankruptcy, it was required to obtain wage concessions from its workers and establish an Employee Stock Ownership Plan.

In 1985 the CAW and Chrysler terminated the stock program. Thousands of workers cashed in their shares in 1986 with the benefits taxed at a 30 percent rate.

The CAW began legal proceedings arguing the benefits should have been treated as capital gains. A Canadian court agreed.

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CANCER

Machining fluids linked to disease

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to be funded by the $4 million occupational health research fund that was established under the 1984 GM/UAW contract.

Results of the study were presented to top GM and UAW officials in April and are circulating within the company and the union. The results have not been made public.

SEX-RACE DISTRIBUTION BY PLANT

	Hydra-Matic	Gear & Axle	Saginaw
White males	9,117	8,626	8,983
Black males	4,398	1,243	847
Males, unknown race	2,318	4,672	1,500
White females	71	1,545	1,052
Black females	455	529	278
Females, unknown race	8	637	105

Source: General Motors and UAW

WIDE-RANGING EFFECTS

Metalworking fluids have been a big concern within the industry for a long time because of their widespread use in components plants. "Whatever we do won't affect just General Motors," VanBrocklin said. "The whole machining fluid industry will follow this; that's why we want to do the right thing."

Machining fluids are used in a variety of common industrial metalworking operations to lubricate and cool the tool and the working surfaces.

The earliest machining fluids were straight oils, used for their excellent lubricating properties. Solubles and some synthetics, introduced in the 1940s, are well suited for grinding because of their cooling properties. Widespread use of synthetics began in the mid-1970s.

Until the middle of the century, most exposure was through the skin. With the introduction of high-speed machinery, substantial exposure to the fluids now occurs via inhalation of the mist.

The study said that more than 10 million workers in the United States are exposed to machining and grinding coolants and cutting oils.

GM said currently about 13,000 of the 45,000 workers at its plants where the oils are used come into direct contact with the fluids.

The Harvard study looked at the health records of nearly 50,000 past and present workers at three GM plants in Michigan — Saginaw Gear & Axle in Detroit, Hydra-Matic in Ypsilanti and Saginaw Steering Gear in Saginaw. The three plants were selected because of the widespread exposure of workers to machining fluids.

GUIDELINES OF STUDY

All hourly employees who had worked at least three years prior to 1985 were included in the study, except those who had worked in a large forge operation at Gear & Axle. Forge workers were exposed to other known toxic and cancer-causing agents that could have confused the results, researchers said.

Fewer than 3 percent of the workers were women, not enough to yield meaningful statistics. So the study was limited to exposed and unexposed men. The health records of unexposed workers were used for comparison.

The Harvard team looked at four types of machining fluids — straight mineral oils, soluble oil emulsions, synthetic fluid solutions and semi-synthetic fluids. The machining operations studied were boring/milling/turning, grinding and transfer machines during three time periods — pre-1970, 1970-'79 and 1980-'87.

Predominantly, straight and soluble oils are used at Gear & Axle, which produces gears and axles for rear-wheel-drive vehicles. All types of oils are used at Hydra-Matic, which makes transmissions. Straight oils are used predominantly at Saginaw Steering Gear.

In analyzing cancer death rates, researchers used only Gear & Axle and Hydra-Matic. They said there were too few deaths at Saginaw Steering to be significant.

Overall, workers at the plants had about the same cancer death rate as the U.S. population in general. That isn't especially good news: Groups of employed people often have death rates 10-20 percent below the national rate, since workers in general are not elderly or in poor health.

"The study does not give a clean bill of health," said Stuart Shalat, who worked with the Harvard team and is now an associate professor of epidemiology at Texas A&M University in College Station. "There was some suggestion that exposure (to machining fluids) is causing problems."

FINDINGS SUMMARIZED

In particular, what concerned the Harvard researchers were "glitches" in specific types of cancers, some nearly four times the general population rate.

For example, white males working with synthetic oils at Gear & Axle died of leukemia at 3.8 times the rate of the general population when a 20-year latency period from exposure was considered.

In one form of cancer — the larynx — death rates were higher than the national average at all the plants studied. The study found risks nearly twice the national average for laryngeal cancer among both black and white males, and that risk increased to more than three times the national average when follow-up was extended to 30 years.

"Overall, our findings suggest a positive association of rectal cancer with straight oil; stomach cancer with soluble oils and grinding; laryngeal cancer with straight and soluble oils; lung cancer with all exposure groupings; prostatic cancer with synthetic and soluble machining fluids and with grinding; brain cancer with soluble oils; leukemia with all exposure groupings, and pancreatic cancer with soluble oils," the report said.

The study also concluded that 20 to 30 percent of the exposed workers suffered breathing problems.

Shalat and VanBrocklin said GM has already been taking steps to reduce exposures to machining fluids.

In 1989, the GM/UAW Occupational Health Advisory Board, a six-member panel of university scientists, recommended that exposure levels not exceed 0.5 milligrams per cubic meter total particulate, even though government standards allow 5.0 milligrams. VanBrocklin said GM meets the 0.5 rate in about 80 percent of its plants.

MORE RESEARCH SLATED

GM currently has contractors evaluating the best methods to reduce exposure in its plants.

The 1990 contract between the UAW and the Big 3 automakers established a joint industrial hygiene committee that is studying air quality in the plants.

"We want to protect our workers," VanBrocklin said.

The new studies will focus on five areas: soluble oils and acute respiratory effects; all machining fluids and acute respiratory effects; respiratory effects connected with synthetic fluids; endotoxins used in machining fluids; and chemical components used in machining fluids.

Harvard and the universities of Massachusetts, Michigan, Iowa and Pittsburgh will collaborate on the studies.

"There's no question that metalworking fluids cause one of the biggest concerns in the plants today," said industrial hygienist Wabeke. For example, he noted that conditions in the fluids encourage growth of potentially dangerous bacteria.

Wabeke, who worked for Ford from 1972 to 1987, said, "The big companies are in pretty good shape, but there are always opportunities for improving conditions in the plants."

Shalat said the findings shouldn't be taken as a criticism of GM. "GM is just a massive company," he said. "Some plants are run immaculately, and others are not so clean, but some exposures are causing problems."

The study recommended that better control could be achieved by altering processes, changing coolants or identifying machinery where enclosures or exhaust systems are especially needed. The researchers also recommended reducing recirculation, increasing fresh-air circulation and providing a means to dehumidify workspace air during the winter.

VW hits campaign trail with lease ad

ARLENA SAWYERS
Staff Reporter

Volkswagen United States is publicizing its lease program with an ad campaign draped in the red, white and blue of the presidential campaign.

The TV spots began during the telecast of the Democratic National Convention in mid-July.

Three 30-second spots were created. One features Passat; another highlights Jetta; and another pairs the two cars.

Dave Schembri, VW director of marketing, said VW chose the political theme because it wanted to capitalize on the excitement generated by the presidential election.

The spots open on a convention floor with a silhouette of crowds and posters in the background. Jetta is in the foreground of one spot.

The voiceover says: "There is nothing in our candidate's past that will prevent him from moving forward." At that point, the Jetta zooms off screen and the crowd explodes in celebration, throwing party hats, streamers and confetti.

The crowd chants "Jetta" as "Otto," the VW stickman, appears on a campaign button and then transforms into the VW logo.

The voiceover of another Jetta spot says: "And unlike many of his colleagues, our candidate would not be bought, he will be leased."

Schembri said consumer feedback indicated that some viewers who watched the convention telecast thought the ad was part of the convention proceedings.

"You cut through the clutter," he said. "It's very complimentary."

The print ads appear in the *Wall Street Journal* and *USA Today*.

The TV commercials also will air during telecasts of the Republican National Convention and the Olympics.

Output and sales rise 20% in Korea

OLES GADACZ
Staff Correspondent

SEOUL — Korean vehicle makers increased first-half output 21.6 percent over a strong period a year earlier.

They built 826,985 vehicles as local demand and exports stayed strong, the Korea Automobile Manufacturers Association reported last week.

Propped by growth at Hyundai Motor Co., the industry's dominant producer, domestic sales grew 20.4 percent, to 610,340 units, the association said. In the first half of 1991, the increase was 15.8 percent over the previous year.

Reflecting a slowdown in the key U.S. market, however, exports rose only 11.9 percent from a year earlier, to 189,247 units. In the first half of 1991, exports had grown 35 percent over the previous year, the association said.

Results from the country's three biggest vehicle makers:

- Hyundai Motor Co.'s sales in the home market rose 9.8 percent from a year earlier, to 274,354, despite an aging model lineup. Exports grew 6.5 percent, to 125,291 units, as shipments to new markets in Europe offset a decline of 35.1 percent, to 30,803, in U.S. exports.
- Kia Motors Corp., a Ford Motor Co. affiliate, said its domestic sales in the first six months jumped 16.1 percent from a year earlier, to 195,161. Exports rose 28.2 percent, to 42,149 units, although shipments to the United States slid 39.4 percent, to 11,576.
- Daewoo Motor Corp., which is 50 percent owned by General Motors, said home-market sales rose 6 percent from a year earlier, to 66,264. Exports rose 9.8 percent, to 17,717 units, but U.S. shipments of the Pontiac LeMans plunged 79.1 percent from a year earlier, to 2,306.

GM is moving to end its role in Daewoo.

ISUZU

GM unlikely to buy more trucks

continued from PAGE 3

truck sales to GM is that Isuzu's joint-venture truck plant in the United States, Subaru-Isuzu Automotive in Lafayette, Ind., is not unionized. Any attempt to source trucks from there would almost certainly be blocked by the UAW.

Another avenue — exporting built-up trucks from Japan — would be prohibitively expensive, Seki said.

"We have to consider the 25 percent (U.S.) duty on built-up trucks if we export, and also the exchange rate," Seki said.

In the meantime, he said, the two are discussing the potential for supplying GM with Isuzu engines. Isuzu would like to replace a GM engine now used in the Rodeo with its own double-overhead-cam V-6 engine used in the Big Horn.

Seki and Sullivan are now overseeing a top-to-bottom cost-slashing plan throughout the company, which posted a consolidated pretax loss of about $415 million for the fiscal year that ended last October.

The goal is to cut the deficit in half in the current fiscal year and return to profitability in the year beginning in November.

The company plans to cut its temporary work force 40 percent by 1993 and is reducing capital investment from about $622 million last year to $545 million. But it will maintain r&d expenditures at the current level of about $480 million.

Seki would not give specifics of the cost-savings target, but said the goal for the current fiscal year ending this October is to cut costs by 15 percent and increase productivity by 13 percent.

Although analysts consider GM's support to be vital to Isuzu's near-term survival, Seki said he took a long-term view toward his relationship with GM.

"Mr. Sullivan's joining us will help us tremendously in making a better appeal to General Motors," Seki said. "But having him on board does not have any immediate effect in real terms."

Hummer maker picks N.M. ad group

SOUTH BEND, Ind. — AM General, maker of the High-Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle, or Hummer, awarded its advertising account to The Competitive Edge in Albuquerque, N.M.

AM General is a division of LTV Missiles and Electronics Group. Hummer was created originally for military use and attracted attention during the Persian Gulf war last year.

Civilian versions of the all-wheel-drive vehicle are to go on sale in October.

Lee Galles, president of The Competitive Edge, said his agency plans to plow "some brand-new ground with a brand-new product. . . It will be a revolutionary experience with a revolutionary vehicle."

Galles said the launch campaign will include network and cable TV and national print ads.

Hummer is built at AM General's plant in Mishawaka, Ind.

JAPANESE LUXURY BRANDS

Sales per dealer based on 1992 projections except for Amati, which is based on 1995-96 expectations.

	Number of dealers: Today	Number of dealers: At start-up	Number of dealers: Ideal	1992 Sales	Sales/dealer (month)
Acura	296	60	300	128,000	36
Lexus	159	73	200	90,500	47
Infiniti	112	52	160	45,000	33
Amati	41	75	130	0	30

Source: Companies, Automotive News Data Center

AMATI

No dealer palaces planned for U.S.

continued from PAGE 1

more money on their facilities, executives at Amati sent the East Coast dealer back to the drawing board. They suggested he retrofit an existing facility and dual Amati service with one of his other lines, cutting his capital investment by more than $1 million.

"It might be nice to have those big Taj Mahals that some dealers have, but we just don't need it," said Frank Beniche, dealer development manager for Amati Division of Mazda Motor of America Inc. "We don't want to take the risk, and we don't want the dealer to take the risk that kind of facility would represent. And we just don't need a building that big."

Amati's 120 to 130 U.S. dealers are expected to sell 25 to 35 cars a month when the network is up and running. Even when it's fully mature, Amati's volume will not top 50,000 units, said Mazda Motor Corp. President Yoshihiro Wada.

NOT TOO OPTIMISTIC

"We are not too optimistic about development of the U.S. market in the future as a whole," Wada said. "We consider this Amati a challenge for Mazda, so we'd rather go for a steady and sound growth."

Amati cars will be built at a new, highly automated $478 million plant in Japan with a capacity of about 160,000 units of as many as 12 models. Besides the units going to the United States, the plant will make cars for Europe, Australia, Hong Kong and Japan.

The go-slow strategy befits Wada, a finance man who became president last December. Before joining Mazda in 1983, Wada spent 28 years with Sumitomo Bank Ltd. Mazda has had a long relationship with Sumitomo, and the financial giant still holds a lot of sway at Mazda.

From its announcement last August, Amati has stressed that dealer profitability will be one of its highest priorities. Wada's comments suggest that the message comes straight from the top.

"Our major attention is for dealers to be able to do this as a business," Wada said. "We are trying to make a setup where there's not a lot of investment for dealers."

In that regard, Wada said Mazda will "not follow the same methods as Nissan, Toyota or Honda" in setting up its luxury channel.

Amati calculates that the average dealer investment will be $700,000, considerably less than the estimated $2 million to $5 million many Lexus and Infiniti dealers spent.

Most of the savings will come from allowing dealers to dual their service shop or locate it on premises separate from the showroom. Most Acura, Lexus and Infiniti dealerships are single-line sales and service outlets.

More savings come from retrofitting an existing building rather than starting from scratch. While Acura, Lexus and Infiniti were reluctant early on to let their dealers use retrofit facilities, Amati estimates that 15 to 20 percent of its initial dealers will have retrofits, and that percentage will likely increase as Amati rolls out to smaller markets.

MODEST NETWORK

Key to Amati's low volume expectations is the modest dealer network it plans. Amati has signed 41 dealers, and it expects to launch with about 75 in 60 markets.

While 75 would be more dealers than Acura, Lexus or Infiniti had at introduction, Amati would slow down substantially after that. Wada said that in its first three years, Amati will add only 45 to 55 dealers.

Lexus, on the other hand, grew from 73 at launch in 1989 to 159 dealers today and plans to expand to 200. After almost three years, Infiniti has 112 dealers and hopes to add 40 to 50. Acura grew in 6½ years to almost 300 dealers, where it would like to remain.

Amati says keeping dealer numbers low is key to keeping dealer profits high. The thinking is that fewer dealers mean a bigger sales territory and higher volume for each dealer.

"We're really conscious about what a market can support in terms of sales and dealers," said Amati spokesman Jack Nerad. "We'll be as careful as we can be, and we'll err on the side of too few, rather than too many."

Nerad said Amati "will always have fewer dealers than Lexus" in each market where they compete.

Wada's projection that Amati will grow to about 50,000 units annually means the dealers would average 400 units a year, which would be in line with Infiniti at this year's pace.

Based on sales for the first half, Acura is on course to sell 128,000 cars this year; Lexus could sell 90,000; and Infiniti 45,000.

THE PRODUCTS

While Wada said it is too early to discuss how Amati will distinguish itself, he is confident the cars will stand out.

"(Mazda has) introduced a number of products, all of which are highly acclaimed in the market. So we're quite confident about producing quality cars that are well accepted," he said.

Regarding product, Amati has said only that it will introduce an entry-level and flagship sedan in 1994. The entry-level sedan will go on sale in Japan next spring.

The flagship will likely be a large, rear-wheel-drive, V-12 model. Some have suggested "Jaguar-esque" styling. The entry-level car is expected to be a stretched version of the Eunos 500/Xedos 6 that is currently being built at the new plant in Hofu City, Japan. The car will be front-wheel drive and likely carry a 3.0-liter, 24-valve, V-6, although some are suggesting it will have a V-8.

Amati will probably add another model by the fall of 1995.

Honda poised to quit F1; decision expected by Sept.

MARY ANN MASKERY
Staff Reporter

TOKYO — In a move that seems to underscore its declining sales and worsening profit picture, Honda Motor Co. confirmed last week that it is "seriously considering" withdrawing from Formula One racing after this year.

President Nobuhiko Kawamoto, who had hinted at the possibility for several years while still executive vice president, said he will make a decision by September.

Analysts said the decision is overdue.

"It's about time to pull out," said Koji Endo, industry analyst for S.G. Warburg Securities in Tokyo.

"The company is now cutting costs and wants to save money as much as possible. But the real reason for quitting is that it has achieved all of its targets."

Honda's fearsome reputation of 66 wins in the top global circuit since 1984 has fostered an image as a youth-centered carmaker, particularly in Europe and Japan.

It also has been a magnet for attracting some of Japan's best young engineers, many of whom — like Kawamoto himself — have gone on to the company's uppermost ranks.

Formula One research also provided spinoffs for Honda's production lineup, particularly in engine research. Racing technical developments led to Honda's new computer-controlled VTEC engine and four-valve engine technology.

Honda insisted last week that its decision will not be dictated by flagging sales or earnings. The company said it spends "less than" $80 million a year on Formula One, although outsiders estimate the cost to be more than double that.

Honda spokesman Shin Tanaka said the company's 100 engineers allotted to the program might better be used in environmental research.

Honda withdrew from Formula One once before, from 1967 to 1984. It used the respite to develop its CVCC engine, which set new industry benchmarks for cleanliness and fuel efficiency.

Analysts say the company has already gotten as much benefit as it can out of the program. After leading Formula One racing for the better part of eight years and winning 15 out of 16 races in 1988, the company has claimed only two wins this season out of nine.

"They should have retreated from F1 last year," said Noriyuki Matsushima, senior analysts at Nikko Research Center.

"That way they could have shown a seriousness in their restructuring efforts, both inside and outside the company. They should quit, prepare a better engine, and come back."

HONDA

U.S. Accord output to be cut

continued from PAGE 1

included a non-production day on July 6 and scheduled non-production hours on each of the three auto production lines at its two Ohio plants. Non-production days are scheduled at Marysville on Nov. 6 and at both plants on March 31. After the adjustments are made, Marysville line No. 1 will build 750 cars per day, Marysville line No. 2, 550 per day, and East Liberty line No. 3, 470 per day.

Production at the Anna, Ohio, engine plant also will be affected. Fewer Accord engines will be built, while production of Civic engines will increase by 170 units per day, the letter said. Accord production at East Liberty will end after the 1992 model year run, leaving the plant to build the Civic.

The actions come as Honda's facade of seeming invincibility in the United States is beginning to show stress lines. Although it still possesses the best-selling car in the country with the Accord, Honda's first-half sales were off 4.5 percent in an overall market that was up 5.1 percent. And market share slipped a half point, to 7.4 percent, while inventories of unsold cars rose to 57 days on July 1 from 40 days a year earlier, according to *Automotive News* estimates.

Analysts said Honda's production adjustment reflects fundamental changes underway in the American marketplace.

"The domestic manufacturers are taking share away from foreign manufacturers as customers realize they have a price-value advantage and have caught up in quality," said Ronald Glantz, San Francisco-based securities analyst for Dean Witter Reynolds.

"Honda, in particular, has suffered because its product quality had been able to justify a premium price, but it's fallen back into the pack."

Honda's nemesis increasingly has become the Ford Taurus, which has made inroads into Accord's sales lead this year. Taurus outsold Accord in March and May. But Accord led Taurus by a narrow 3,879 units in June and by 10,473 units for the six months.

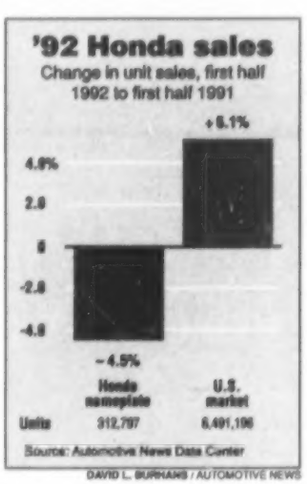
The Civic was the ninth best-selling car in June, but Saturn was only slightly more than 100 units behind — representing just a few hours worth of sales.

In their letter to suppliers, Imai and Nelson stressed that the reductions will not result in layoffs of Honda workers, or "associates" as they are called.

They said the company's underlying philosophy has not changed: To keep production as stable as possible so that quality and cost competitiveness are not affected.

But much of the letter is devoted to Honda's slipping levels of quality relative to its competitors.

"Throughout our history together, (Honda) associates and suppliers have concentrated on improving our quality and cost competitiveness in order to produce the best quality products for our customers," the letter said. "We must focus on improving our efficiency and competitive strength now more than ever."



DAVID L. BURHANS / AUTOMOTIVE NEWS

The letter said Honda will be investing in more training for assembly line workers during its fiscal third quarter, and will involve more workers earlier in new model development to help reduce cost and raise quality.

Suppliers were urged to step up their quality and cost efforts as well. In September, the letter says,

> "Although we made quality improvements in the 1992 J.D. Power Initial Quality Survey, our competitors made bigger gains. We must do better."
>
> SATOSHI IMAI
> HONDA

Honda will be building the cars that will be surveyed in the 1993 J.D. Power and Associates Initial Quality Survey, and special attention should be given to recover ground lost to competitors in 1992.

Honda overall placed fourth on the 1992 Power survey, moving up two places when Acura and Mercedes dropped out of the top five. Honda's score improved about 5 percent from 111 problems per 100 cars to 105 problems per 100 cars.

Meanwhile, the industry average improved 11 percent from 141 problems per 100 cars to 125 problems per 100 cars. And one of Honda's most successful rivals, Saturn Corp., improved its IQS score 28 percent, from 151 problems per 100 cars in 1991 to 109 problems per 100 cars in 1992. That moved Saturn into sixth place overall.

Dave Conant, president of the Honda dealer council and general manager of Norm Reeves Honda Superstore in Cerritos, Calif., said Honda is using good judgement by cutting production.

"I think that to their credit they're paying attention to the market," he said.

"Honda's never had to be so concerned with inventory in the past, it was just a matter of how many they could build. For Honda and most Honda dealers, this is a new experience. But I still say this is absolutely the best franchise out there."

Staff Reporters Kristine Stiven Breese in Los Angeles and Mary Ann Maskery in Tokyo contributed to this report.

BMW has expansion plans for S.C. plant

PETER BROWN
Editor

BMW AG hopes to expand its proposed South Carolina assembly plant by the end of the decade to reach its planned capacity of 60,000 to 70,000 cars a year.

The second phase will cost $175 million and will nearly double the size of the plant. The $300 million first phase will enclose 1.9 million square feet. BMW officials say production will begin in 1995.

Timing of phase two "is based on how well we are doing with our new plant" in Greer, S.C., said Carl Flesher, BMW's vice president for public relations for the South Carolina project.

BMW has not disclosed what car it will build in South Carolina, but last week officials did comment on several aspects of the project:

- While BMW plans to keep the 400-person headquarters of its U.S. sales arm in Woodcliff Lake, N.J., it intends eventually to move some operations from there to South Carolina.

"Take purchasing or engineering: They're definitely functions which we have to combine, and which are better located there than here," said Karl Gerlinger, president of BMW of North America. He said the company hasn't even begun to assess how many jobs might be shifted.

- An American with experience in the U.S. auto industry has been chosen to manage the Spartanburg County factory. Flesher said the manager will be announced soon.
- BMW will resist efforts to unionize the plant, BMW Chairman Eberhard von Kuenheim said in an interview with American journalists in Munich. "We don't need an outside, third party between management and our employees. We think a third party would only disturb these relations," von Kuenheim said.

He said workers will receive relatively high wages and benefits for the area.

- BMW will use a building in Spartanburg for temporary headquarters.
- The first 80 to 100 production employees will be hired early next year and will spend three to six months in Germany learning the BMW system. The employees will return to train others and become the supervisory team at the plant.
- About 50 Germans will establish permanent residence in the Greenville-Spartanburg area.
- In 1995 and 1996, car production will rise from 50 cars a day to 300 cars a day. AN

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

INCENTIVE WATCH— DEALER INCENTIVES

CONTINUING PROGRAMS

ACURA (1992 models; expires Aug. 3)

Integra	$500

AUDI (1991 models, no expiration date)

Audi 100 and 200	$1,500
Audi 90	$1,000

Rebates apply to models purchased by dealer from Audi of America port stocks.

BMW (no expiration date)

750iL (1991)	$10,000

CHEVROLET (1992 models, expires Sept. 23)

Corvette ZR-1 (1992)	$2,000
Other Corvette (1992)	$1,000

HONDA (1992 models; expires Aug. 3)

Accord	$200-1,500 based on quota
Civic	$400

ISUZU (expires Sept. 30)

Impluse (1991)	$2,500
Impulse (1992)	$1,500
Stylus (1991 Calif.)	$800-2,000
Stylus (1991)	$800-1,100
Stylus (1992)	$500
*Pickup (1991-'92)	$800-1,600
*Rodeo (1991-'92)	$400-1,400

*Dealer can choose flat payment or one based on number sold.
Dealer has the option to sharing rebate with buyer.

LOTUS (1991, no expiration date)

Elan	$5,000
Esprit Turbo	$11,000-15,000

MITSUBISHI (1991-92 models, expires July 31)

Mirage	$500-1,000, quota
Galant	$1,000-1,500, quota
Galant VR-4	$500-3,000, based on number sold
(Galant VR-4 payments are in addition to other Galant rebates.)	
Eclipse	7% of sticker, starts with second sale
Pickup	$1,000-1,500, quota

PEUGEOT (no expiration date)

405	$5,000
505	$6,000

PORSCHE (1991 models, no expiration date. To qualify for the following rebates, dealers had to buy two cars from port stock by Jan. 17.)

911 Carrera 2, 928	$9,500
911 Carrera 4	$13,500
911 Turbo	$14,000

SUBARU (1992 models, expires Aug. 3)

Loyale	$500
Legacy (invoiced before Feb. 4)	$1,000
Legacy (invoiced after Feb. 4)	$1,500

SUZUKI (expires Aug. 3)

Swift (1992)	$400-700
Sidekick (1992)	$700-1,500
Swift (1991)	$700-1,000
Sidekick (1991)	$500-1,000

TOYOTA (expires Aug. 3)

Tercel (1991-92)	0-$300, quota
Corolla (1992)	$700-$1,500, quota
Pickups	$200-1,400, quota

VOLKSWAGEN (1992 models; expires July 31)

Corrado (exclude V-6), Cabriolet	$1,500
Passat	$750
Jetta, GL and Carat	$500
Golf (exclude diesel), Fox	$500

incentive WATCH

Nissan pays $250-$2,000

Nissan Motor Corp. in U.S.A. is paying rebates of $250 to $2,000 to dealers for sales of 1992 models. The program continues until the end of September.

On cars, **Nissan** is paying dealers $250 on the Maxima SE; $800 on the Sentra two-door; $950 on other Sentras; $1,000 on the Maxima GXE; $1,000 on all 240SX models except the convertible; and $2,000 on Stanzas.

The importer also is paying dealers $1,750 on pickup trucks. The Pathfinder sport-utility does not carry a rebate.

— *Charles E. Ramirez*

Inspections will save money, EPA says

The Associated Press

The new nationwide program to take vehicle emissions inspections out of the local service station and into centralized, state-run test centers won't result in long lines, an EPA inspection official says.

He says it's also likely to save car owners some money as well.

Studies have shown that centralized inspection sites charge lower prices and move cars through faster than smaller shops, according to the EPA.

"There's a lot of mythology about the convenience of a decentralized program. But the truth is, dropping in for an emissions test at the local service station is a myth," said Gene Tierney, inspection and maintenance chief at EPA's Office of Mobile Sources in Ann Arbor, Mich.

The EPA has issued new rules requiring the centralized programs. They are likely to put many smaller, independent shops out of the test business in the 29 states that currently have decentralized inspection programs. But the new regulations also prohibit test centers from doing repairs. That work will presumably go to the shops that no longer do testing.

Fourteen states already have centralized programs, and seven have mixed programs.

"In a centralized system, for the 85 percent of motor vehicles that passed their initial test, it's much more convenient," Tierney told *The Denver Post*. "Those owners may have to drive a little farther, but they're in and out in 15 minutes."

A 1991 Riter Research survey found the average waiting time in contract-run, centralized programs is 22 minutes, compared with 90 minutes in decentralized programs.

The average decentralized inspection cost is $17.70 per vehicle, compared with $7.16 in a government-run centralized program and $8.47 in a contractor-run centralized program, EPA said.

EPA officials say decentralized inspections cost more because quality control and training in a dispersed system cost more.

Another plus, according to the EPA, is that centralized programs are 20 to 40 percent more effective in catching cars that violate air pollution standards. The agency bases its conclusion on undercover audits in which agents pose as motorists with cars rigged to fail.

"In decentralized programs, about 50 percent of the time the stations pass you when they should fail you," Tierney said. "In centralized programs, that occurs only about 2 percent of the time."

EPA attributes the discrepancy to a lack of mechanic training, failure to follow procedures and deliberate falsification. AN

INCENTIVE WATCH — CUSTOMER INCENTIVES

CONTINUING PROGRAMS

CHRYSLER CORP.
(Expires Aug. 31; 1991-92 models unless otherwise indicated; in lieu of rebates, finance rates of 4.9 to 9.9 percent are offered.)

Chrysler Imperial, New Yorker, Fifth Avenue	$1,500
LeBaron Coupe, (1991-93)	$1,500
Imperial ('93), Fifth Ave. ('93)	$1,250
New Yorker Salon, LeBaron sedan and convertible	$1,000
New Yorker Salon ('93)	$750
Dodge Daytona ('91)	$1,500
Spirit, Dynasty	$1,000
Daytona ('92-93)	$1,000
Dynasty ('93)	$750
Shadow	$700
Colt 3-dr. (excludes Calif. and Hawaii)	$700
Dodge Ramcharger	$2,000
Ram pickup (gas, '91-93)	$1,500
Ram wagon, van/ conversion ('91-93)	$1,000
Dakota, Ram 50	$500
Eagle Talon (awd)	$1,500
Talon (2wd)	$1,000
Summit 4 door	$1,000
Summit 3-dr. (except Calif. and Hawaii)	$700
Summit wagon ('92)	$500
Jeep Cherokee	$1,500
Wrangler, Comanche	$500
Cherokee ('93)	$500
Plymouth Laser (awd)	$1,500
Acclaim, Laser (2wd)	$1,000
Sundance	$700
Colt 3-dr. (except Calif. and Hawaii)	$700
Vista	$500
Minivans Short wheelbase	$500
Caravan C/V short and long w.b.	$500
Long wheelbase Calif. and) Hawaii only)	$500

FORD MOTOR CO.
1993 models
Expires Sept. 23. In lieu of rebates, 7.9 percent financing is available.

Ford Festiva	$500
Escort (regional)	0-$400
Mercury Capri	$500
Tracer (regional)	0-$400

1992 models
Expires Sept. 23. In lieu of rebates, financing rates of 2.9 to 7.9 percent are offered.

Ford Probe, Thunderbird	$1,500
Festiva, Taurus SHO	$1,000
Other Taurus (regional)	$750-1,000
Mustang (regional)	$500-1,000
Tempo, Crown Victoria	$500
Escort (regional)	$400-1,000
Ford Econoline RV	$1,300
Bronco	$1,000
Ranger (regional)	$750-1,000
Aerostar (regional)	$500-1,000
F series	$300
Lincoln Mark VII	$3,000
Town Car	$2,000
Continental	$2,000
Mercury Cougar	$1,500
Capri (regional)	$1,000-1,500
Sable (regional)	$750-1,000
Tracer (regional)	$400-1,000
Grand Marquis	$750
Topaz	$500
Crown Victoria; Grand Marquis for owners of Ford Motor Co. products	$1,000

GENERAL MOTORS
1992 models
Expires Sept. 23. In lieu of rebates, financer rates of 2.9 to 6.9 percent are offered. Some rebates vary by regions.

Buick Century, LeSabre	$250-1,000
Skylark	$500-1,250
Regal	$750-1,500
Roadmaster, Park Avenue	$1,000
Riviera	$2,000

Rebates based on option package ordered.

Cadillac DeVille, Brougham, Fleetwood	$2,500
Chevrolet Geo Metro (manual), Camaro, Corsica, Beretta, Caprice	$500
Geo Metro (automatic)	$700
Cavalier	$750
Geo Metro conv.	$1,000
Geo Storm, Geo Prizm, Lumina	$1,500
Chevrolet C/K pickups	$300
Astro, G-Van	$500
Geo Tracker (2wd), S/T pickup	
Lumina APV	$750
Geo Tracker (4wd)	$1,000
G-Van Upfit	$1,300
S/T Blazer	$2,000
GMC G-Van, Safari	$500
Sonoma	$750
Jimmy (exclude Typhoon)	$2,000
Oldsmobile Sihouette, Eighty Eight	$500-1,000
Cutlass Supreme	$500-1,250
Custom Cruiser, Bravada	$500-2,000
Toronado	$500-2,500
Achieva	$750
Cutlass Ciera	$1,000
Ninety Eight	$1,500

Some rebates may vary by region.

Pontiac Sunbird, Grand Am	$500
Grand Prix	$500-750
Bonneville, Firebird Trans Sport	$750

Rebates vary by geographical areas.

1991 models

Chevrolet Geo Storm (expires Sept. 23)	$750

HYUNDAI (expires Oct.2)

Sonata ('91)	$2,000
Excel ('91)	$1,200
Scoupe SE ('91)	$1,000
Other Scoupe ('91)	$1,500
Sonata ('92)	$1,500-$2,000
Elantra ('92)	$750-1,000
Excel ('92)	$500-750
Scoupe ('92)	$500-750

MAZDA (1992 models, expire Sept. 8)

Protege, MX-6	$1,400
626	$1,200
MPV	$1,000
Navajo	$750-1,500
Pickups	$750-1,000

Navajo and pickup rebates vary by model and region.

SUBARU (1992 models, expire Aug. 3)

Loyale (fwd sedans)	$500
Loyale (awd sedans)	$500

Saturn wins lawsuit over use of name

GWENDOLYN ZONGHETTI
Special Correspondent

DETROIT — Saturn Corp. is finally free of a 6-year-old lawsuit challenging its right to the Saturn name.

The U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan upheld a 1988 dismissal of a suit brought by Saturn Tire and Rubber, maker of specialty tires for tractors.

The suit, filed in 1986, charged that Saturn Tire and Rubber had first rights to the Saturn logo and that Saturn Corp. had no right to assemble cars bearing the name.

In 1988, the case was dismissed when federal Judge Robert DeMascio ruled that Saturn Corp. had not yet produced a single automobile.

Just prior to the start of Saturn automobile production, Saturn Tire and Rubber said it would try to halt production of the car.

Earlier this month, DeMascio refused to overturn the 1988 dismissal because the tiremaker has not sold any products bearing the Saturn name since 1983.

"Most troublesome to me was the realization that GM was being held for ransom," said General Motors attorney Ken Enborg.

"Their company was going out of business with no help from us. They thought they would be able to get millions out of us. This took six years and a lot of money in legal expenses to resolve," Enborg said.

Saturn Tire and Rubber declined to comment on the case. AN

SCHEDULED PLANT CLOSINGS

Plant	Weeks down	Units lost/ week
CHRYSLER		
Newark, Del.	7/27	*
Dodge Spirit		
Plymouth Acclaim		
Chrysler LeBaron J		
FORD		
Wayne, Mich.	7/27, 8/3	5,700
Ford Escort		
Ontario Truck (Oakville, Ontario)	7/27	3,000
Edison, N.J.		*
Ford Ranger		
Twin Cities (St. Paul, Minn.)		**
Ford F-series		
Ford Ranger		
GENERAL MOTORS		
Lake Orion, Mich.	7/27	*
Detroit-Hamtramck, Mich.	7/27	*
Arlington, Texas	7/27	***
Bowling Green, Ky.	7/27	***
Doraville, Ga.	7/27	***
Fairfax, Kan.	7/27	***
Buick City (Flint, Mich.)	7/27	***
Lake Orion, Mich.	7/27	***
Lansing, Mich. (C plant)	7/27	***
Lansing, Mich. (M plant)	7/27	***
Lordstown, Ohio	7/27	***
Oklahoma City	7/27	***
Spring Hill, Tenn.	7/27	***
Van Nuys, Calif.	7/27	***
Wentzville, Mo.	7/27	***
Willow Run, Mich.	7/27, 8/3, 8/10, 8/17	***
Wilmington, Del.	7/27	***
Oshawa, Ontario (No. 1)	7/27	***
Oshawa, Ontario (No. 2)	7/27	***
Baltimore	7/27	***
Detroit	7/27	***
Fort Wayne, Ind.	7/27	***
Janesville, Wis.	7/27	***
Lordstown, Ohio	7/27	***
Moraine, Ohio	7/27	***
Pontiac, Mich. (East)	7/27	***
Pontiac, Mich. (West)	7/27, 8/3	***
Shreveport, La.	7/27	***
Tarrytown, N.Y.	7/27	***
Oshawa, Ontario	7/27	***
Scarborough, Ontario	7/27	***
CAMI		
Ingersoll, Ontario	7/27	
HYUNDAI		
Bromont, Ontario	7/27	***
Sonata		
Total U.S. car		5,700
Total Canada truck		3,000
Total units lost week of 7/27		8,700

*Model changeover
**Plant closed until September for model changeover
***Vacation.
Source: Automotive News Data Center

Judge changes mind to settle Porsche suit

A federal judge in Idaho has vacated his own ruling of two years ago so a tentative settlement between a plaintiff and Porsche AG can become final.

The case was sent back from the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit.

In October 1990, Judge Marion J. Callister said that Craig Neilsen could not sue Porsche over an allegedly defective seat back because the 1966 motor vehicle safety law pre-empted any state regulation unless it was identical.

He noted that the car complied with federal Safety Standard 207.

Nielsen had argued the seat back should have been stronger than the standard because the Porsche is a rear-engine vehicle.

He appealed, and the Trial Lawyers for Public Justice, the Center for Auto Safety and Motor Voters filed a friend-of-the-court brief.

They pointed to the exception made in the law for suits brought under common law.

Last March, Callister told the federal appellate court he would vacate his earlier ruling for Porsche if the case were remanded.

— Helen Kahn

U.S. AND CANADA CAR AND TRUCK PRODUCTION

Vehicles are assembled in the United States unless noted. Vehicles are cars unless noted.

	Est. 7/26-7/25/92	Actual 7/13-7/18/92	7/1-7/25/92	Year 1/1-7/25/92	Year 1/1-7/27/91
Concorde (Can.)	0	0	8	14	0
LeBaron J	0	1,228	3,566	33,743	18,697
New Yorker	0	0	357	9,123	4,773
Fifth Avenue	0	0	1,629	21,470	20,697
Imperial	0	0	41	2,760	4,563
Town & Country (trk.)	0	47	1,010	9,041	1,988
Total Chrysler Div.	**0**	**1,275**	**5,613**	**76,151**	**50,718**
Sundance	1,200	0	1,781	32,518	27,007
Acclaim	0	1,199	3,593	43,185	48,336
Voyager (trk.)	0	1,861	4,636	54,474	54,852
Voyager (Can. trk.)	2,274	0	3,474	71,718	59,174
Total Plymouth	**3,474**	**3,060**	**13,484**	**201,895**	**189,371**
Intrepid (Can.)	440	384	918	974	0
Daytona	350	0	350	7,224	4,936
Shadow	1,200	0	2,303	53,413	32,253
Dynasty	0	0	3,116	47,342	66,450
Spirit	0	1,246	3,817	42,047	43,369
Viper	6	10	24	83	0
Monaco (Can.)	0	0	0	0	5,343
Caravan (trk.)	0	2,746	6,517	71,486	65,372
Caravan (Can. trk.)	2,271	0	3,542	94,335	79,571
Caravan C/V (trk.)	0	11	38	1,875	2,109
Caravan C/V (Can. trk.)	0	0	0	4,395	11,834
Dakota (trk.)	0	0	4,508	77,045	46,032
Ram pickup (trk.)	0	0	831	32,093	46,082
Ram wagon (Can. trk.)	0	1	516	13,205	12,647
Ram van (Can. trk.)	0	50	2,318	37,887	23,310
Total Dodge	**4,267**	**4,448**	**28,798**	**483,404**	**439,388**
Vision (Can.)	395	0	693	760	0
Premier (Can.)	0	0	0	0	5,630
Cherokee (trk.)	2,800	2,655	7,544	74,505	69,622
Comanche (trk.)	0	0	0	915	2,827
Grand Cherokee (trk.)*	1,700	0	4,313	38,143	1,560
Briarwood (trk.)	0	0	0	325	1,451
Wrangler (trk.)	175	0	175	175	0
Wrangler (Can trk.)	0	0	0	29,026	32,181
Total Jeep-Eagle	**5,070**	**2,655**	**12,725**	**143,849**	**113,271**
Total U.S. car	**2,756**	**3,683**	**20,579**	**292,908**	**271,083**
Total Can. car	**835**	**384**	**1,619**	**1,748**	**10,973**
Total U.S. truck	**4,675**	**7,320**	**29,573**	**360,077**	**291,895**
Total Can. truck	**4,545**	**51**	**9,850**	**250,566**	**218,717**
CHRYSLER CORP.	**12,811**	**11,438**	**61,621**	**905,299**	**792,668**
Escort	5,783	5,792	11,575	103,396	112,957
Mustang	2,792	0	2,792	53,554	46,212
Tempo	3,426	3,350	6,776	76,542	62,924
Tempo (Can.)	0	0	1,617	68,392	63,089
Taurus	9,840	9,358	19,198	221,169	184,354
Thunderbird	2,150	2,200	4,350	50,288	44,022
Crown Victoria (Can.)	0	0	4,444	61,262	47,541
Aerostar (trk.)	4,100	4,106	8,206	103,039	91,652
Bronco (trk.)	727	715	1,442	13,424	8,545
Explorer (trk.)	6,564	6,464	13,028	172,614	148,673
Mazda Navajo (trk.)	0	0	0	2,982	5,871
Econoline (trk.)	4,480	4,196	8,676	109,468	77,509
Heavy (trk.)	966	961	1,927	25,358	19,991
Light truck (trk.)	9,920	6,301	16,221	248,072	166,658
Light truck (Can. trk.)	0	0	1,478	76,328	54,685
Ranger (trk.)	1,714	1,648	3,362	153,750	143,918
Total Ford Division	**52,462**	**45,091**	**105,093**	**1,539,638**	**1,278,601**
Topaz	1,494	1,454	2,948	33,907	27,908
Topaz (Can.)	0	0	687	27,240	20,473
Cougar	1,440	1,298	2,738	32,950	34,441
Sable	2,844	3,076	5,920	72,802	60,820
Grand Marquis (Can.)	0	0	4,426	58,025	48,631
Mercury Villager (trk.)	455	344	799	3,047	0
Nissan Quest (trk.)	286	255	541	1,813	0
Total Mercury	**6,519**	**5,427**	**18,059**	**229,784**	**192,273**
Continental	837	847	1,684	21,606	31,632
Mark VII	0	0	0	2,375	5,541
Town Car	2,529	2,543	5,072	64,760	74,444
Total Lincoln	**3,366**	**3,390**	**6,756**	**88,741**	**111,617**
Total L-M Division	**9,885**	**9,817**	**24,815**	**318,525**	**303,890**
Total U.S. car	**33,135**	**29,918**	**63,053**	**733,349**	**685,255**
Total Can. car	**0**	**0**	**11,174**	**214,919**	**179,734**
Total U.S. truck	**29,212**	**24,990**	**54,202**	**833,567**	**662,817**
Total Can. truck	**0**	**0**	**1,478**	**76,328**	**54,685**
FORD MOTOR CO.	**62,347**	**54,908**	**129,908**	**1,858,163**	**1,582,491**
Skylark	0	688	2,125	34,413	27,510
Century	0	189	3,604	48,903	52,092
Regal (Can.)	0	2,500	6,465	59,776	70,437
Riviera	0	191	705	7,246	13,558
Park Avenue	0	1,330	3,546	34,770	64,715
LeSabre	0	3,710	10,013	93,768	30,614
Roadmaster sedan	0	1,130	2,643	25,325	13,592
Roadmaster wagon	0	120	414	6,657	16,848
Reatta	0	0	0	0	1,206
Total Buick	**0**	**9,858**	**29,515**	**310,858**	**290,572**
Eldorado	0	310	1,230	21,275	6,616
Seville	0	690	2,741	31,116	14,271
Brougham	0	0	0	2,170	10,857
De'Ville	0	0	824	64,013	84,522
Allante	0	64	159	1,099	1,817
Total Cadillac	**0**	**1,064**	**4,954**	**119,673**	**118,083**
Cavalier	0	4,524	9,405	127,664	155,024
Camaro	0	1,606	4,287	40,806	29,600
Corsica-Beretta	0	4,160	10,608	116,140	152,384
Lumina (Can.)	0	5,050	13,016	139,106	130,684
Caprice	0	2,565	8,208	70,753	79,466
Corvette	0	384	1,086	12,556	13,135
Astro (trk.)	0	2,809	6,654	85,327	52,861
Blazer (trk.)	0	367	1,226	13,596	4,794
Lumina APV (trk.)	0	1,063	3,092	27,299	24,370
Mediums (trk.)	0	194	510	4,001	980
P-model (trk.)	0	618	1,403	14,227	12,122
Pickup (trk.)	0	6,573	15,650	154,841	167,483
Pickup (Can. trk.)	0	2,700	7,164	106,484	78,860
S10 (trk.)	0	5,168	11,277	106,635	150,290
S10 Blazer (trk.)	0	2,332	6,428	74,237	19,255
Sportsvan (trk.)	0	0	0	11,405	24,593
Sportsvan (Can. trk.)	0	1,240	3,244	43,989	31,966
Suburban (trk.)	0	1,118	2,915	29,919	17,265
Total Chevrolet	**0**	**42,491**	**106,175**	**1,178,985**	**1,145,152**
Achieva/Calais	0	2,214	6,345	71,233	34,616
Cutlass Ciera	0	259	4,735	74,086	46,785
Cutlass Ciera (Can.)	0	0	0	0	41,089
Cutlass Supreme	0	1,314	2,478	47,378	62,007
Toronado	0	0	54	3,280	2,870
Eighty Eight	0	1,282	3,418	41,158	41,359
Custom Cruiser wag.	0	0	0	1,927	5,513
Ninety Eight	0	0	194	17,540	46,645
Silhouette (trk.)	0	227	655	8,938	12,990
Bravada (trk.)	0	164	269	7,166	9,878
Total Oldsmobile	**0**	**5,460**	**18,149**	**272,706**	**303,752**
Sunbird	0	1,708	3,543	52,641	71,222
Grand Am	0	6,866	15,832	144,949	87,061
Firebird	0	594	1,628	14,567	9,828
Grand Prix	0	2,653	6,412	64,760	60,104
Pontiac 6000	0	0	0	0	19,603
Bonneville	0	2,330	6,217	57,068	31,151
Trans Sport (trk.)	0	1,226	3,546	24,683	15,961
Total Pontiac	**0**	**15,377**	**37,178**	**358,668**	**294,930**
Yukon-Jimmy (trk.)	0	212	452	4,152	1,445
Medium (trk.)	0	352	868	12,257	1,241
P-model (trk.)	0	85	459	1,919	1,654
Pickup (trk.)	0	2,764	5,309	59,755	73,639
Pickup (Can. trk.)	0	1,020	2,731	39,017	31,121
Syclone-Sonoma (trk.)	0	1,261	2,718	28,018	36,016
Typhoon-S15 Jimmy (trk.)	0	650	1,894	23,470	6,656
Safari (trk.)	0	900	2,201	35,171	22,842
Suburban (trk.)	0	725	1,906	18,557	14,325
Vandura (trk.)	0	0	0	5,803	11,209
Vandura (Can. trk.)	0	570	1,472	19,516	13,944
Total GMC	**0**	**8,539**	**20,010**	**247,635**	**214,092**
Total Saturn	**0**	**5,340**	**13,832**	**114,391**	**47,494**
Total U.S. car	**0**	**46,221**	**126,338**	**1,443,652**	**1,334,885**
Total Can. car	**0**	**7,558**	**19,481**	**198,882**	**242,210**
Total U.S. truck	**0**	**28,828**	**69,434**	**751,376**	**681,869**
Total Can. truck	**0**	**5,536**	**14,611**	**209,006**	**155,911**
GENERAL MOTORS	**0**	**88,123**	**229,864**	**2,602,916**	**2,414,075**
Can. car	0	1,500	4,404	61,342	64,270
Can. trk.	0	1,000	2,772	37,906	28,673
CAMI*	**0**	**2,500**	**7,176**	**99,248**	**92,943**
DIAMOND-STAR*	**2,241**	**2,135**	**6,796**	**83,036**	**88,718**
Civic	2,115	2,071	5,842	55,010	51,534
Civic (Can.)	2,107	2,098	6,205	62,125	61,122
Accord	7,485	7,151	20,340	215,408	203,703
Total U.S. car	**9,600**	**9,222**	**26,182**	**278,418**	**255,237**
Total Can. car	**2,107**	**2,098**	**6,205**	**62,125**	**61,122**
HONDA	**11,707**	**11,320**	**32,387**	**332,543**	**316,359**
HYUNDAI Sonata (Can.)	**0**	**0**	**12**	**6,755**	**16,450**
AUTO ALLIANCE*	**5,107**	**4,671**	**13,529**	**55,872**	**89,755**
U.S. trk.	1,553	0	2,308	36,488	41,778
Can. trk.	205	0	313	4,796	4,111
NAVISTAR	**1,758**	**0**	**2,621**	**41,284**	**45,889**
Altima	700	463	1,276	1,276	0
Sentra	2,310	2,307	6,451	69,730	75,286
Pickup (trk.)	2,834	2,710	7,721	73,424	74,134
NISSAN	**5,844**	**5,480**	**15,448**	**144,430**	**149,420**
Geo Prizm	1,600	1,527	5,183	49,929	56,721
Toyota Corolla	2,500	2,462	8,227	68,558	62,306
Toyota Pickup (trk.)	1,800	1,799	5,862	34,047	0
NUMMI	**5,900**	**5,788**	**19,271**	**152,534**	**119,027**
Legacy	1,200	1,178	3,036	33,207	32,194
Pickup (trk.)	575	488	1,345	13,177	0
Rodeo (trk.)	925	753	2,206	23,502	0
Total U.S. car	**1,200**	**1,178**	**3,036**	**33,207**	**32,194**
Total U.S. trk.	**1,500**	**1,241**	**3,551**	**36,679**	**30,042**
SUBARU-ISUZU	**2,700**	**2,419**	**6,587**	**69,886**	**62,236**
Camry	4,900	4,827	14,311	136,035	124,254
Corolla (Can.)	1,500	1,488	4,840	42,601	39,590
TOYOTA	**6,400**	**6,315**	**19,151**	**178,636**	**163,844**
VOLVO 740, 940 (Can.)	**44**	**150**	**380**	**3,915**	**5,145**
AM GENERAL (trk.)	**300**	**300**	**1,080**	**10,500**	**11,650**
MISCELLANEOUS (trk.)**	**1,920**	**1,920**	**6,912**	**67,200**	**76,570**
Total U.S. car	**66,049**	**166,614**	**294,960**	**3,237,970**	**3,074,894**
Total Canada car	**4,486**	**13,170**	**48,115**	**582,287**	**619,494**
Total U.S.-Canada Car	**70,535**	**121,784**	**343,075**	**3,830,257**	**3,694,388**
Total U.S. truck	**43,794**	**99,108**	**180,642**	**2,283,358**	**1,970,855**
Total Canada truck	**4,750**	**6,58;**	**29,825**	**578,982**	**462,997**
Total U.S.-Canada truck	**48,544**	**75,689**	**209,868**	**2,781,900**	**2,332,952**
TOTAL U.S.	**109,843**	**177,722**	**475,602**	**5,441,328**	**4,945,749**
TOTAL CANADA	**9,236**	**19,751**	**77,140**	**1,179,889**	**1,081,591**
TOTAL U.S.-CANADA CAR & TRUCK	**119,079**	**197,473**	**552,742**	**6,612,217**	**6,027,340**

*Estimate
**1991 figures reflect Grand Wagoneer production.
†CAMI includes Geo Metro and Suzuki Swift cars and Geo Tracker and Suzuki Sidekick trucks; Diamond-Star includes Eagle Summit and Talon, Mitsubishi Eclipse and Mirage and Plymouth Laser; Mazda includes MX-6, 626 and Ford Probe.
**Estimates for Mack, Volvo-White, Kenworth, Peterbilt, Freightliner, Mercedes-Benz.
Source: Automotive News Data Center.

Wrangler rolls at Toledo

GWENDOLYN ZONGHETTI
Special Correspondent

Chrysler Corp. began production of the 1993 Jeep Wrangler last week at the revamped Toledo, Ohio, facility. The Wrangler was previously produced at the Brampton, Ontario, plant.

With General Motors on vacation last week, car and truck production plunged in the United States and Canada.

U.S. car production was estimated at 66,049, down 39.2 percent from the prior week and 16.8 percent below last year.

Year-to-date car assembly in the United States is 3,237,970, down 5.3 percent from this point in 1991.

Canadian auto production last week was scheduled at 4,486, dropping 65.9 percent from the prior week and 63.0 percent from the year-ago week.

So far in 1992, Canada has built 592,287 cars, down 4.4 percent from 1991.

Truck production in the United States last week was scheduled at 43,794 units, down 36.6 percent from the prior week and 26.8 percent from the corresponding week last year.

Year-to-date, U.S. truck production exceeds 1991 by 25.4 percent.

Last week's truck production in Canada was 4,750, down 27.8 percent from the prior week and up 8.2 percent from the year-ago week.

This year, 578,602 trucks have been assembled in Canada, up 25.2 percent from last year.

Last week's estimated daily build rate of cars and trucks in the United States and Canada was 23,816, down 39.7 percent from the prior week and 23.6 percent from the year-ago week.

Last week's estimated vehicle build in the United States was shared as follows: Ford Motor Co., 56.8 percent; Honda of America Manufacturing Inc., 8.7 percent; Chrysler Corp., 6.8 percent; New United Motor Manufacturing Inc., 5.4 percent; Nissan Motor Manufacturing Corp. U.S.A., 5.3 percent; Auto Alliance International Inc., 4.6 percent; Toyota Motor Manufacturing (U.S.A.), 4.5 percent; Subaru-Isuzu Automotive Inc., 2.5 percent; Diamond-Star Motors Corp.; 2.0 percent; Miscellaneous, 1.7 percent; Navistar International Corp., 1.4 percent; and AM General, 0.3 percent;

Ford Motor Co. slated daily overtime at three car plants and three truck plants last week.

The car plants were: Wayne, Mich.; Atlanta and Chicago. The truck plants were: Michigan Truck (Wayne, Mich.); Louisville, Ky.; and St. Louis.

The Kansas City, Mo., car and truck plant also worked daily overtime.

Ford's St. Thomas, Ontario, plant worked daily overtime last Monday.

The facility assembles the Ford Crown Victoria and the Mercury Grand Marquis.